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ABSTRACT

This report outlines policies to aid administrators of athletic, physical education, and intramural programs as they seek to provide leadership to the club sports movement on their campuses. The report first discusses the recent emergence and popularity of club sports, and explains some advantages of club sports over varsity sports. The next section deals with operational guidelines and emphasizes consideration of individual welfare. The following section presents selection criteria for administrators, as well as suggestions regarding financing and location of club sports activities. Procedures are then suggested for organizing the club sports program and providing a framework within which it should function. The procedures include (a) establishment of a club sports advisory council, (b) selection of participants, (c) decisions on academic eligibility, and (d) attainment of varsity status. The next section concerns administrative procedures, specifically financing and legal liability. The final section concerns scheduling, including coordination of club sports schedules with other athletic activities, priority use of facilities, expansion of facilities, and number of scheduled conferences and distance to be traveled. (PB)

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CLUB SPORTS
in
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A project of the Task Force on Club Sports
of the National Association for Sports and Physical Education
of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

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FORWARD

The Cabinet of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education believes that the recent club sports development on college and university campuses is a desirable extension of intramural and intercollegiate sports programs. This publication is an effort by NASPE to provide guidance and direction for emerging club sports programs and to encourage further expansion in this exciting area.

It is hoped that these suggested policies will be an aid to administrators of athletics, physical education and intramural programs as they seek to provide leadership to the inevitable club sports movement on their campuses. A need for program structure and format has been observed. Hopefully, this need will be served by this booklet.

EVOLUTION

Club Sports are generally conceded to have been the forerunners of the intercollegiate sports movement in America.

Students interested in a particular sport or activity banded together in activity clubs, somewhat in the manner of the sport clubs in English universities. (Indeed, the English influence upon American sports in the early 1860's was so strong that almost all the sports participated in were of English origin. Only gradually were rules of some of the games or sports adapted or changed, or new sports invented such that they took on peculiarly American characteristics.) Later on these student groups began to expend time and energy in developing specialized teams to represent their groups, in colleges, schools, or municipalities, as the case happened to be. This, then, was the beginning of a varsity-like program.¹

In addition, club sports have had a profound influence on the intramural sports movement in this country.

During the past decade, many weaknesses and deficiencies in the varsity athletic programs, plus an increasing demand by students for participation in the decision-making process at the collegiate level and even at the secondary level, have led to a revival of this earlier movement. Increased sport opportunities, improved physical education programs, a greater awareness resulting from television, and increased mobility, have made students much more interested in "doing their own thing". Wise administrators and leaders see many great benefits in this renaissance, and they seek to avoid some of the problems that appeared in the earlier club movements. Care and prevention of football injuries was the factor that led to the gradual shift of control of early athletics programs from the students to the faculty and administration of the various institutions. These are among the concerns that must be considered in a well-planned club sports program.

¹Mueller, P, and Mitchell, E.D., Intramural Sports, New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1960, pp. 17-18.

RATIONALE

Competition in various forms is a characteristic of the democratic society in which we live. From birth, children compete with each other. They are taught that the person who builds a better mousetrap, sells more automobiles, obtains better grades, or wins more games will generally be looked upon more favorably than his peers who are less successful. There is competition at the highest levels of our society, as evidenced by the intense political campaigns.

The urge to compete - against others, against one's environment, or against one's self - whether innate or developed, is a fact of life. The popular writing of anthropologists such as Konrad Lorenz, Desmond Morris, and Robert Ardrey supply ample evidence that this urge is universal to animals. The urge to compete is so strong in humans that societies have developed means, some artificial in nature, to control the potential destructiveness of unrestrained competition. Areas of competition within society range from economic competition in business, civil service examinations, to beauty contests, etc.

Varsity competition in athletics by civilized people attempts to satisfy competitive urges in a socially acceptable manner. But here many professional educators, realizing that varsity athletics may satisfy the participants' competitive urges, have noted that such programs may drive potential participants away from activity, by failing to fulfill other basic human needs. The emphasis on winning in sports often deprives the participants of other important personal benefits. The simple enjoyment of the sport, the development of team spirit, and the physical, social, and emotional benefits of participation in sports contribute significantly to the individual.

Varsity sports often fail to provide personal benefits for a variety of reasons.

1. Enjoyment: not always achieved at the varsity level because of overemphasis on winning, leading to overly long practice sessions. Restrictions on playing only one varsity sport may also tend to eliminate enjoyment because of boredom.
2. Physical Fitness: often approached from a punishment, or highly specific point of view, rather than positively, with humanistic and self-actualization goals. Many varsity level programs may not be oriented toward life-time sports.
3. Self-discipline: may be replaced by coaches' disciplinarianism approach.
4. Development of sportsmanship: modern practices in intercollegiate athletics frequently antithetical to this; e.g., padding schedules and violating recruiting eligibility and playing rules.

In addition, great student interest has become evident in ecologically oriented activities such as cycling, backpacking, and kayaking. Generally, it is only through the club sports program that students are able to find an organized means to both learn about and participate in such activities. Properly organized club sports and intramural programs should provide the potential settings for achieving the above-mentioned values.

Competition for All

Offering the interested students the opportunity to take part in inter-collegiate competition is a major goal for club sports programs. Included among those desiring participation on a club sport team are the following kinds of students: students whose skills may not be of varsity caliber, students who may not wish to devote the time and energy demanded by modern varsity sports, students who prefer a more relaxed approach to competition, students interested in a sport for which there is not a varsity team, and students who for academic or other reasons cannot conform to varsity inter-collegiate regulations. Chief among the latter group are graduate, professional and part-time students and staff.

Judicious guidance of interested students, long-range planning, and an efficient program will hasten the day we achieve the goal of sports' participation for all who wish it.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Many club sports teams are desirous of having as little formalized structure as possible. State and local regulations have delegated to the schools, and/or to the agents of the schools, the responsibility of preventing unsafe practices and eliminating hazardous safety conditions. Athletic competition at the club sports level may be as ferocious, as intense, and as potentially dangerous and frustrating as competition at the varsity level. Therefore, guidelines and safeguards are needed to protect the safety of the participants, the spectators, and the reputation of the institution. When guidelines for club sports competitions are established, the welfare of the individual must be a primary consideration.

CRITERIA FOR ADMINISTRATORS

A club sport is a group of people gathered to engage in competitive physical activity. Success in a club sport may be dependent upon physical prowess and athletic skill. Frequently, the varsity intercollegiate competition format is employed in the club sports program. Therefore, club sports should be housed in the Physical Education, Intramural, and/or Intercollegiate Athletic unit. The chief administrative officer of the club sports program should be the administrative officer of either the Department of Physical Education, Intramurals, or Intercollegiate Athletics because:

1. Professional preparation to handle the club sports program should include a Bachelor's and/or Master's Degree with an academic emphasis in Physical Education or Recreation, and Administration.

2. Campus sport and recreation facilities and equipment should be under his supervision.
3. The administrator should be responsible for the organized, structured, and scheduled athletic contests for the student body of the club sports program.
4. The administrator should have a broad background of sports and other related athletic activities.
5. The specialist is knowledgeable in appropriate areas of responsibility including:

The Place of Athletics in Education
 The Sponsorship of Clubs
 Financing of Club Sports
 Eligibility of Club Sports Participants
 Facilities, Equipment, and Instruction for Club Sports
 Rules for Participation in Club Sports
 Intercollegiate Competition
 Priorities Regarding Use of Facilities
 Scheduling of Games for Club Sports
 First Aid and Emergency Care Procedures
 Prevention and Care of Athletic Injuries
 Selection, Assignment, and Evaluation of Coaches
 Legal Liability for the Institution and Participants
 Insurance Coverage for Participants
 Travel, Meals, and Lodging for Participants
 Public Relations for Club Sports Programs
 Assignment of Staff

Within this unit either a professional physical educator, recreation professional, or sports administrator should be designated as the director of the Club Sports Program. The director should work cooperatively with the college or university administration, coaches, and the student affairs unit. The rationale:

1. Participants on Club Sports teams will be participating in vigorous physical activity. There should be adequate health and medical safeguards and insurance coverage.
2. A physical education or recreation professional should have the expertise to provide the necessary instruction, organization, and the leadership abilities to supervise the Club Sports programs.
3. Other personnel working directly with Club Sports programs should be professionally prepared in the area of Physical Education and Recreation.

The club sports program should be appropriately supported financially from general university funds, student fees, club sports dues, and/or gate receipts. The Director of Physical Education, Intramurals, and/or Athletics should be the budgeting officer because of his expertise.

Each club sport should have an advisor, who is either a full-time staff member or a qualified graduate assistant (not necessarily a physical educator). The ability to participate in the decision-making process without domination is one of the most important traits that should be sought in this individual. The advisor must be someone who is acceptable to the membership of the club sport; preferably, he should be chosen by that group.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CLUB SPORTS PROGRAM

The following procedures are suggested as guidelines for organizing the club sports program and providing a framework within which it should function.

Load compensation for the advisors is a factor that should be departmentally determined.

Commercially sponsored club sports teams should be subject to all applying institutional and program operating regulations.

Establishment of Club Sports Advisory Council

The Club Sports Advisory Council should be established as an advisor to the administrator responsible for the club sports program. Its function should include:

1. Recommending club sports policies;
2. Serving as the liaison between the club sports program and the director;
3. Recommending scheduling policies and approving schedules submitted by the program director;
4. Recommending budgetary procedures and approving budgets submitted by the program director;
5. Evaluating the club sports program;

6. Recommending regulations and operating procedures pertaining to all club sports;
7. Recommending and approving new club sports and new club sports programs.

The Club Sports Advisory Council should be representative of the campus community. The membership should be elected or selected from:

1. Club sports representatives;
2. Student Athletic Board;
3. Student Government Association;
4. Student Affairs;
5. Student Fees Board;
6. Intramural Governing Board;
7. Class presidents, or other class officers;
8. Faculty Athletic Committee, or other faculty committees.

Who Can Participate?

Generally, eligibility to participate in club sports should be open to all undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff. However, because club competition in certain sports may be chiefly with varsity teams, participation in these activities may be necessarily restricted to eligible full-time undergraduates. In some situations, basic funding for club sports is derived from general undergraduate fees, which implies that faculty, staff, and graduate students may not be eligible unless they pay an appropriate fee.

Subject to institutional regulations, the approval of the Club Sports Advisory Council, and the program director, each club sport would recommend its eligibility requirements for membership and/or participation.

Additional participation requirements may pertain to special safety or skill requirements of the activity. For example, a basic swimming skills test might be a requirement for an aquatic-oriented club.

On occasion, and within prescribed parameters, non-college personnel may be permitted to participate in certain collegiate-based club sports.

Academic Eligibility

Specific scholastic requirements are not recommended. Academic stipulations are imposed only when certain club sports participate basically with varsity teams from other institutions, or when institutional requirements govern the eligibility of such participation.

Attainment of Varsity Status

In some instances, club sports provide a short term stepping stone to varsity status. This is particularly true in sports in which the competition is predominately varsity in nature, and this revolution may be encouraged for such sports. It should be understood, however, that for many club sports, participants prefer the less structured atmosphere of club sports, as contrasted with the more formal varsity approach, and aspire only to provide expanded competitive opportunities for interested student participants.

In many situations, it is suggested that the attainment of varsity status for that sport follow a procedure determined by the varsity intercollegiate athletic unit. It may be appropriate and desirable to have the Club Sports Advisory Council work cooperatively with other affected units or administrators to expedite the transition from a club sport to a varsity sport. Among the considerations basic to changing status from a club sport to a varsity sport are:

1. Demonstrated stability and continuity of the club sport over several seasons;
2. Willingness of the participants of the club sport to adhere to eligibility standards required by regulating bodies controlling varsity programs;
3. Geographic availability of competition that is basically varsity in nature;

4. Adequate undergraduate eligible membership to insure continued interest;
5. Availability of professional coaching staff;
6. Committed available funding to support a varsity-level program.
7. Official varsity designation by appropriate college or university officials, such as Athletic Council, and the Director of Inter-collegiate Athletics;
8. Adequate facilities for the sport to function at the varsity level.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Now that an examination has been made of why schools may wish to have a club sports program, who should conduct this program, and how this program should be organized, it must be determined specifically how this program should be managed. Within this domain fall such considerations as funding, legal liability, eligibility, scheduling, and other related administrative procedures.

Financing Considerations

Funding has been a problem that has plagued athletic endeavors at the collegiate level since their inception. Club sports are no exception. Funding is a major consideration in both the planning and the operation of any club sports program. Ideally, the money for travel, equipment, insurance, and other related expenses should come preferably from the general funds and/or student fees, dues and gate receipts. However, in many institutions, because of the philosophy of the administration or state regulations governing the expenditure of tax revenues, monies from the general fund may not be possible. When such situations confront a club sports program, other means of funding may include such approaches as suggested above and a variety of fund-raising activities. Fee charges for participants may be established, when appropriate, to cover the use of lockers, equipment, and facilities expenses.

While these means of funding club sports programs are not ideal, they do provide a way to make it possible to conduct a highly worthwhile program. Creating student involvement in the financing process may broaden the students' educational experience and develop a sense of an invested interest in the program.

A program is only as strong as its leadership. Earlier, the competencies desirable for club sports administrators and sponsors were discussed. Obviously, these competencies would be possessed only by highly trained individuals. An important consideration in the planning of a club sports program is the availability of compensation for individual services to the program. It is recommended that the same guidelines be followed for compensating personnel as are used for compensating personnel for other related kinds of activities, such as club sponsorship, band direction, varsity coaching, theatrical direction, etc. Some club sport coaches may be full-time faculty; others may be graduate assistants or possess expertise and interest in a desired area. Whether the compensation for personnel is in terms of release-time or a stipend or salary, or voluntary service, should be determined by institutional policy.

Most athletic programs are constantly striving to overcome problems related to inadequate facilities. This lack of facilities causes some administrators not to be receptive to club sports. It should be pointed out that by increasing the scope of the athletic program to include club sports, a strong justification has been added for an increase to, and improvement of, existing facilities. Additional student involvement resulting from this approach should appreciably improve student support for the club sports and athletic program, thereby adding a potentially powerful lobby to assist in acquiring funding for additional facilities.

As the club sports program develops at an institution, the number of different clubs and the number of participants may continually increase. Program funding, coaching compensation, and other related areas need to be coordinated between

clubs as this occurs. It is recommended that the Program Director for the club sports program serve as the budget coordinator to provide efficiency of supervision and administration for the total program. The Program Director shall supply valuable expertise to the various clubs, and relieve them of certain financial administrative duties and responsibilities for which their members and sponsors may have little skill or knowledge.

Legal Liability

For any function that an institution sponsors, it assumes a degree of responsibility and, therefore, legal liability. When it funds a club sport, provides it with sponsorship, coordinates its budget, etc., the activity becomes an official part of the school program. Therefore, it is only logical that the same procedures and policies designated to protect participants in school programs be followed for club sports. These should include:

1. Insurance for all participants, which should include appropriate coverage for athletic injuries and any other illness or injury related to participation in the program. A combination insurance package comprised of faculty/student/family and college or university required or provided insurance is acceptable.
2. Annual medical examinations for participants in contact and vigorous activities designated by the institution.
3. Regulations guaranteeing that a participant has experienced a sufficient amount of pre-season practice time to assure a level of physical conditioning and skill acquisition making participation reasonably safe. It is recommended that the guidelines for varsity programs for each individual sport be consulted in establishing these regulations.
4. A planned and supervised program for the care and prevention of athletic injuries. Included within this program should be a provision for a qualified person to be available or on call during all games or contests. Provision should also be made for adequate emergency transportation.
5. Regulations detailing approved emergency care and procedures for treatment of those injured while participating in club sports. A planned method for the reporting of all such injuries should be included also.

6. Established policies governing procedures to be followed when traveling, making overnight stops, etc. These should include such considerations as types of vehicles to be used, who can drive them, age of driver, how many riders per vehicle, who is allowed to travel, how much distance can be traveled in a day, hours of travel, conduct while traveling, insurance required, and type of supervision required.
7. Regulations detailing appropriate equipment for each activity.
8. Parental permission or other appropriate waiver forms for participation, when applicable.
9. Facilities that are safe and that by their nature do not create any undue hazard for the participant.

Whether legal liability rests with the institution or with the sponsor, or with a combination of the two, depends upon the laws of a particular state. Adherence to the above recommendations will go a long way toward eliminating suits due to negligence. Negligence has generally been defined as "failure to act as a reasonably prudent individual would under the prevailing circumstances." It is the negligence consideration that strongly suggests a tighter structuring of the club sports program and direct institutional management.

SCHEDULING THE PROGRAM

A final important concern centers around the scheduling of the club sports program. Included in this discussion is the necessity of the coordination of indoor and outdoor athletic facilities with the athletic, intramural, physical education, and recreation programs. The limitations, if any, on the number of contests to be scheduled, and such matters as the distances to be traveled, should be the responsibilities of the club sports director.

Schedule Coordination

As previously noted, few, if any, colleges and universities have sufficient space and facilities to handle all of the needs of regularly scheduled physical education classes, intramurals, varsity athletic teams, and the club sports

program. It is imperative, therefore, that all facilities receive optimal use. This can be best achieved by having a coordinator for scheduling facilities. He should be responsible only to the administrator of the unit. It is highly recommended that a standard procedure be initiated by which all interested groups are allowed to apply for the opportunity to use the facilities appropriate to their activity.

Optimal efficiency of use implies the scheduling of an appropriate activity in every facility at every hour with due consideration for cleaning and maintenance requirements. Consideration should be given to hours during which facilities are not normally used. Bowling boomed during World War II because proprietors recognized the need for recreation for workers on the swing shift from 4:00 P.M. to midnight. Morning bowling leagues were also developed for use by those who worked from midnight to 8:00 A.M. Colleges have extended the use of their facilities throughout the evening and weekends. In the future, schools may find it necessary to schedule activities all night to meet student needs and to achieve maximum use of limited facilities.

Priority of Use of Facilities

By expanding the hours of facility utilization, the coordinator of scheduling must establish priorities for use. Although circumstances will vary from institution to institution, each institution must establish its own priorities for use of facilities. Club sports should be included in these priorities.

Expansion of Facilities

When it becomes apparent that existing facilities will not accommodate the program, the wise administrator turns his effort towards expanding the facilities.

The effort to acquire new facilities must be coordinated with all facility users participating. Individual groups such as the athletic department, the

physical education department, the intramural department, or the recreation department, that try to secure facilities for themselves, frequently fail to acquire facilities because individual user groups do not "swing enough weight". If, however, all groups coordinate their efforts to acquire facilities, success is possible. The chief administrator is the logical person to organize a concerted effort to acquire additional facilities. It is his responsibility to serve as the representative of the athletic, physical education, intramural, recreation and club sports program to coordinate the requests for additional space needed by these groups. This person should be the most knowledgeable as to what is needed to satisfy the facility needs of the various units since he assumes the responsibility of the coordinator of facilities.

Number of Scheduled Contests and Distance to be Traveled

Rules and regulations governing class attendance and distances to be traveled by participants or club sports teams should be established and must be consistent with institutional regulations for students participating in other extra-curricular activities.

* * * * *

It is hoped that all institutions will realize the tremendous potential club sports have for increasing the number of students involved in a dynamic competitive program. Once an institution makes this commitment to its students, it is strongly recommended that all policies and procedures governing its club sports program be published in a handbook that is readily accessible to all members of both the student body and the faculty.